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House of Representatives

The House met at 10:30 a.m.

The Reverend Elizabeth C. Sisco, Christ United Methodist Church, Levelland, Texas, offered the following prayer:

Most Holy One, we are Your people. Today, once again, we ask that Your wisdom, truth and mercy guide the decisions that will be made here in these halls.

May the law made here be such that each of Your children, wherever they may be, experiences Your promise of peace and justice.

May this promise become a reality which recognizes, accepts, affirms and respects our differences; a reality which shares and honors our common humanity; a reality which seeks truth with sensitivity and fairness; a reality which nurtures all of Your creation; a reality which commits to our service of each other in a real and diverse world; a reality which affirms Your gift of grace to all men, women and children.

This we pray in the name of the One who was, is, and always will be. Amen.

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THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

Mr. McNULTY. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to clause 1, rule I, I demand a vote on agreeing to the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

The SPEAKER. The question is on the Chair's approval of the Journal.

The question was taken; and the Speaker announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. McNULTY. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER. Pursuant to clause 8, rule XX, further proceedings on this

question will be postponed until later today.

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

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PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from New York (Mr. NADLER) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. NADLER led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

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MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Mr. Lundregan, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has passed a concurrent resolution of the following title in which concurrence of the House is requested:

S. Con. Res. 97. Concurrent resolution expressing the support of Congress for activities to increase public awareness of multiple sclerosis.

□

REVEREND ELIZABETH SISCO

(Mr. COMBEST asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. COMBEST. Mr. Speaker, I rise to welcome and honor the Reverend Elizabeth Sisco, who graciously offered today's morning prayer. Reverend Sisco is a remarkable pastor and civic leader who has touched the lives of many in the West Texas community.

Reverend Sisco serves at Christ United Methodist Church in Levelland, Texas, where she focuses on empowering her congregation. Even before Reverend Sisco went to seminary, she took an extraordinarily active role in her church and worked to raise thousands of dollars to aid the poor in

Texas. A proud wife, mother, and grandmother, she also served her community on the Lubbock Independent School Board.

Reverend Sisco began studying theology with the intention of gaining more church responsibility for the lay people of her church. She was called to the clergy when she discovered that she could change lives with her keen understanding of theology and her ability to draw individuals together.

Reverend Sisco has certainly changed lives as a mediator, a confidant, and respected community figure. I thank her for the words she offered this morning and her gift of service to our region.

□

GUN SAFETY LEGISLATION

(Mr. NADLER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, our country is flooded with deadly weapons, and it is time we take real action to protect our families and children from the wave of gun violence that is sweeping America.

Too many innocent people have died because of the lack of tough, smart, Federal gun control laws. Too many criminals, mentally unstable individuals and children still have easy access to handguns.

The American people are calling out for change in our gun laws. They support closing the gaping gun show loophole in the Brady law. They support banning large capacity ammunition clips. They demand trigger locks. And as the Million Mom March will demonstrate on Mother's Day, they also support handgun licensing and registration.

I urge my colleagues to cosponsor the legislation that I introduced and several others introduced in September to require licensing and registration of all handguns.

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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Mr. Speaker, the problem is not with the American people; they know what is best for the country. They support common sense gun safety legislation. The problem is with the leadership of this House that is subservient to the NRA. As long as the NRA controls this House, the people's voice will not be heard. Sadly, the American people pay a heavy price for the failure of the leadership of this House.

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CAMPAIGN FINANCE LAWS NEED TO BE ENFORCED

(Mr. HAYWORTH asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HAYWORTH. Mr. Speaker, it is a good question. Just exactly who is subservient to whom? The Vice President of the United States had as one of his principal campaign fund raisers an agent of the Chinese government.

My colleagues, it is true that our children are vulnerable, but not to law-abiding citizens who obey existing laws. They are vulnerable to those who refuse to enforce existing laws and those who would break campaign laws. Yet our friends from the left will get up and talk about campaign finance reform.

I would remind this body again, to have the Clinton-Gore gang talk about campaign finance reform is akin to Bonnie and Clyde at the height of their crime spree holding a press conference demanding tougher penalties for bank robbers. It is absurd.

We embrace the Constitution, we embrace enforcing and abiding by existing law, and all the laws in the world make no difference if they are not obeyed.

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NRA RUNNING OUT OF ARGUMENTS AGAINST GUN SAFETY

(Mr. CONYERS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, the House passed the Lofgren motion a week ago instructing the conferees to insist that the comatose gun safety conference meet. A week later, the silence is deafening.

The silence you hear, Mr. Speaker, is the NRA, National Rifle Association, running out of arguments against gun safety. First they said the gun laws do not work, but the Brady law stopped 500,000 felons, fugitives and stalkers from buying guns.

Then they said we need to enforce the laws. So now everyone supports enforcement.

But when you hear the NRA cry its misleading statistics, remember, it is a trick, a trick to divert attention from their opposition to closing the gun show loophole, a trick so that the NRA does not have to explain why it supports laws that allow criminals to get their guns back, and it is a farce. The NRA opposed the laws they now want

so badly enforced, and the NRA has made sure that the agencies that enforce the gun laws can only do so with one arm tied behind their back.

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PREVENTING A NUCLEAR CATASTROPHE

(Mr. GIBBONS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GIBBONS. Mr. Speaker, it is common knowledge that nuclear waste is one of the most dangerous and deadly substances known to man. Yet before us today is Senate bill 1287, a bill which calls for the transportation of this deadly material across 43 States, near your neighborhoods, past your homes and school yards.

Overwhelming scientific evidence shows that transporting the unprecedented amount of nuclear waste as required in Senate bill 1287 endangers our environment and the lives of millions of Americans living across those 43 States. The Department of Energy estimates that a rail accident involving a shipment of nuclear waste would result in the radioactive contamination of a 42-square mile area.

Mr. Speaker, a cleanup of this environmental disaster would cost the taxpayers \$620 million and require 460 days just to complete, millions of dollars, hundreds of days spent cleaning up a catastrophe that we can prevent today by voting no on Senate bill 1287.

Protect the lives of your constituents and our precious environment. Vote no on Senate bill 1287.

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OVERBURDENING OSHA REGULATIONS HURTING AMERICANS

(Mr. TRAFICANT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. TRAFICANT. Mr. Speaker, this month the Occupational Safety and Health Administration announced that American homes are dangerous and "a hazard to workers who work in their own home."

Now, if that is not enough to bust your subdermal hematoma, check this out: employers who allow their own employees to work out of their own homes are now liable if their employee gets hurt in their very own home.

Beam me up.

What is next? Will husbands be fined for an aggressive honeymoon in their very own home?

I recommend that Congress ship OSHA to Japan and China, and let them screw those countries up.

I yield back the fact that these overburdening regulations in America are killing American jobs and forcing American companies to move overseas.

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RISING GAS PRICES HURTING AMERICANS

(Mr. STEARNS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1

minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, we have recently celebrated the first day of spring, and very soon Americans will take to the roads for their summer vacations. At least that is what they would like to do.

Unfortunately, rising gas prices may keep many Americans from taking summer vacations this year. Gasoline prices are rising out of control, with the possibility of reaching close to \$2.00 per gallon this summer. These fuel prices have also forced airlines to raise ticket prices.

Mr. Speaker, today our Nation is more dependent on foreign oil than we were during the gas crisis of the 1970s, and Energy Secretary Bill Richardson admits that the Clinton-Gore administration was "caught napping."

Well, while the administration has been sleeping, gas prices have been skyrocketing. I hope the Clinton-Gore administration wakes up soon, because Americans cannot afford much more of these outrageous gas prices.

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SUPPORT THE CHILD HANDGUN AND INJURY PREVENTION ACT

(Ms. CARSON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. CARSON. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to ask my fellow colleagues a very important question: When is enough? Every day across the country our children are dying due to gun violence, and yet Congress has failed to stop the killing and protect our children.

I want to commend the Smith & Wesson agreement to provide safety locks on their handguns within 60 days and to make them child resistant within a year. I would encourage the manufacturers of Glock, who have the market on the law enforcement guns across this country, to follow suit.

Although this is a monumental step in the right direction for the gun industry, Members of Congress still have a long way to go to protect our children and our communities. My bill, H.R. 515, the Child Handgun and Injury Prevention Act, which I introduced in the first session of this Congress, would require child safety devices on all newly manufactured handguns. We have 72 cosponsors. We need another 363 cosponsors.

Mr. Speaker, we need to provide sensible gun legislation which would mandate child safety protection devices on handguns.

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□ 1045

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT SHOULD OPERATE LIKE PRIVATE SECTOR

(Mr. DUNCAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DUNCAN. Mr. Speaker, almost every day we read or hear about some